

Hamilton County EQIP Ranking

The EQIP Ranking Process for 2003

The new EQIP ranking process is designed to accomplish several tasks. First, District Conservationist and our conservation partners will be able to quickly rank an application and determine the priority for planning applications. Second, it will allow each county to identify and prioritize their natural resource concerns. Third, it will give higher priority to areas of the state that have the greatest potential for environmental problems, maximizing environmental benefits.

The process will work as follows. A client wishes to make application for EQIP assistance. The District Conservationist or partnership employee discusses the process and the requirements of the EQIP program with the client. In order to be ranked, the client must; (1) have the stated resource concern on the land being offered for contract, and; (2) be willing to treat the resource concern to quality criteria as found in the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide.

Four statewide ranking criteria are defined. The criteria are broad and address the major resource concerns in Indiana. Maps will be provided to each field office that cover each of the criteria listed under each resource concern. Each application will be ranked for all of the resource concerns that it addresses. Where an application addresses more than one resource concern, the concern that ranks the highest will be used for the state ranking. In order to be ranked, the resource concern must be present and the EQIP plan must address the concern.

The four statewide resource concerns are Livestock, Water Quality, Erosion, and Forest Health.

Each application will be ranked for both state and local concerns. Each application will receive a score that is a composite of the statewide and local ranking. The scores will range from high for both state and local resource concerns (HH) to low for both (LL). The applications will be broken into 9 tiers for planning priority and funding. The first letter represents the local ranking and the second represents the state ranking

1. HH – High ranking for both local and state criteria.
2. HM – High for local and medium for state.
3. MH – Medium for local and high for state.
4. MM – Medium for local and state
5. LH – Low for local and high for state
6. HL – High for local and low state
7. LM – Low for local and medium for state
8. ML – Medium for local and low for state
9. LL – Low for local and state

The Local Ranking is based on a point system for each resource concern. Within a resource concern all points for practices or activities should be totaled to determine the final Local Ranking for that resource concern.

The State Ranking is based on geographic criteria. For each resource concern, determine which criteria apply based on location of the farm on the provided resource maps. Add the number of criteria that apply and determine the ranking from the State Ranking

Running behind the scene is a system that converts the rankings of high, medium or low into points. These points are used to distinguish between applications within each tier. Applications with higher numerical score will be at the head of the list for funding within a tier. Points are assigned to an application based on the ranking of the resource concerns and the number of resource concerns the farmer will address with the EQIP plan. The more resource concerns he will address the higher his numerical score. A higher numerical score does not affect which tier the application is in, only the priority for funding within a tier.

Livestock

Water quality is negatively impacted because of animal production activities. (60% of the EQIP funding statewide will go to Livestock concerns)

Points Local Ranking Criteria

- 1 Site is within a 14 digit HUC watershed of a 2002 303d listed stream.
- 2 Proposed practice(s) addresses Air Quality Concerns (ex. windbreaks)
- 3 Proposed practice(s) exclude for livestock from waterbodies
- 1 Implementation of practices as part of a spill management plan (ex. diversions)
- 2 Implementation of a comprehensive nutrient management plan (no points if required by construction of manure storage structure)
- 1 Closure of existing manure structure
- 1 Facility is within 500 feet of a waterbody
- 1 Manure Storage Structure upgrade, construction or expansion
- 1 Additional point for manure storage structure which expand capacity beyond 180 days or increase field availability
- 2 Implementation of a prescribed grazing plan

The local ranking for the application is based on:

High - 3 or more points

Medium - 2 points

Low – 1 point

State Ranking Criteria

Not all of the State criteria are relevant in Hamilton County as identified in bold.

- The acres for contract are in one of the top 19 counties for the number of animal units. **(Hamilton County is not one of the counties)**
- The acres for contract are in one of the top 32 counties of pastureland acres. **(Hamilton County is not one of the counties)**
- The acres for contract are within the 14 digit HUC of a stream listed on the 303d List for Ecoli contamination. **(Some Watersheds in Hamilton County are listed)**
- The acres for contract are in one of the 17 counties that ranks high for animal manure versus cropland acres. **(Hamilton County is not one of the counties)**

The state ranking for an application is based on:

High - 3 or more of the criteria apply

Medium - 2 of the criteria apply.

Low – 1 or 0 of the criteria apply.

Highest ranking possible in Hamilton County is High Low.

Water Quality

Water quality is negatively impacted by agricultural activities.

Points Local Ranking Criteria

- 1 Implementation of practices as part of a spill management plan (ex. diversions)
- 1 Implement Nutrient Management
- 1 Implement Pest Management
- 2 Practice is part of an Organic Farm Program, either on an existing certified organic farm or on a site which is undergoing the certification process.
- 2 Implement Conservation Buffers
- 3 Proposed practice(s) excludes livestock from waterbodies
- 1 Site is within a watershed on a 2002 303d listed stream

The local ranking for the application is based on:

High - 3 or more points

Medium - 2 points

Low – 1 point

State Ranking Criteria

Not all of the State criteria are relevant in Hamilton County as identified in bold.

- The acres for contract are within an 11 digit HUC of a surface water supply. **(Some watersheds in Hamilton County are listed)**
- The acres for contract are within the 14 digit HUC of a 2002 303d listed stream. **(Some watersheds in Hamilton County are listed)**
- The acres for contract are within an area of high groundwater vulnerability. **(Some watersheds in Hamilton County are listed)**
- The acres for contract are within the 14 digit HUC of a scenic river or lake. **(Hamilton County is not one of the counties)**

The state ranking for an application is based on:

High – 3 or more of the criteria apply.

Medium - 2 of the criteria apply.

Low – 1 or 0 of the criteria apply.

Highest ranking possible in Hamilton County is High High.

Erosion

Soil quality is negatively impacted by excessive erosion.

Points Local Ranking Criteria

- 1 Offered acreage contains a “C” slope or steeper
- 1 Practices to address gully erosion (ie. Waterways)
- 1 Additional point for gully erosion activities on a watershed which exceed 80 acres in size
- 2 Conversion to a Continuous No-Till system
- 1 Conversion to a Spring Till Only system
- 1 Conversion to permanent cover (pasture)
- 1 >30% of offered acreage is designated HEL
- 1 Use of winter cover crops

The local ranking for the application is based on:

High - 3 or more points

Medium - 2 points

Low – 1 point

State Ranking Criteria

High - soil erodibility weighted by cropland acres per county.

Medium - soil erodibility weighted by cropland acres per county. **(Hamilton County is listed as Medium)**

Low - soil erodibility weighted by cropland acres per county.

Highest ranking possible in Hamilton County is High Medium.

Forest Health

Forest quality is negatively impacted.

Points Local Ranking Criteria

- 1 Tree Planting
- 1 Timber Stand Improvement
- 1 Existing woods will be expanded.
- 1 Trees will be planted on soils which were formed under historic forest condition
- 1 Planting Creates Wildlife Corridor connecting existing woods
- 2 Windbreaks for Air Quality around Livestock Facilities

The local ranking for the application is based on:

High - 3 or more points

Medium - 2 points

Low – 1 point

State Ranking Criteria

Not all of the State criteria are relevant in Hamilton County as identified in bold.

- Disease or insect damage. **(Hamilton County is not one of the counties)**
- Soils with slopes where forestation would be beneficial **(Some slope in Hamilton County qualify)**
- The acres for contract are within a Forest Legacy area **(Hamilton County is not one of the counties)**
- The top 33 counties with the highest percent of forest land **(Hamilton County is not one of the counties)**

The state ranking for an application is based on:

High – 2 or more of the criteria apply.

Medium - 1 of the criteria apply.

Low - none of the criteria apply.

Highest ranking possible in Hamilton County is High Medium.

Hamilton County Equip Ranking Worksheet

Name:

Date of Application:

Address:

Tract(s):

Phone:

Best Ranking: _____/_____

Total Score:

Livestock Score: _____/ Low

Numeric Score:

Points Local Ranking Criteria

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | 2002 303d listed stream. |
| 2 | Addresses Air Quality |
| 3 | Livestock exclusion |
| 1 | Implement Spill Management |
| 2 | Comprehensive nutrient management |
| 1 | Manure Structure Closure |
| | Below IDEM regulatory threshold |
| 1 | Manure Storage Structure upgrade |
| 1 | Expand capacity beyond 180 days |
| 1 | Increase field availability |
| 2 | Prescribed grazing |

Water Quality Score: _____/_____

Numeric Score:

Points Local Ranking Criteria

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Implement Spill management |
| 1 | Implement Nutrient Management |
| 1 | Implement Pest Management |
| 2 | Organic Farm Program |
| 3 | Implement Conservation Buffers |
| 3 | Livestock exclusion |
| 1 | 2002 303d listed stream |

The local ranking for the application is based on:

High - 3 or more points

Medium - 2 points

Low – 1 point

Points State Ranking Criteria

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Surface water supply watershed |
| 1 | 2002 303d listed stream |
| 1 | High groundwater vulnerability |

The state ranking for an application is based on:

High – 3 or more of the criteria apply.

Medium - 2 of the criteria apply.

Low – 1 or 0 of the criteria apply.

Erosion Score: _____ / Medium

Numeric Score:

Points Local Ranking Criteria

- 1 "C" slope or steeper
- 2 Gully Erosion
- 1 Gully erosion > 80 acres watershed
- 2 Conversion to a Continuous No-Till system
- 1 Conversion to a Spring Till Only system
- 1 Conversion to permanent cover (pasture)
- 2 HEL Ground
- 1 Winter cover crops

The local ranking for the application is based on:

High - 3 or more points

Medium - 2 points

Low – 1 point

Forest Health Score: _____ / Medium

Numeric Score:

Points Local Ranking Criteria

- 1 Tree Planting
- 1 Timber Stand Improvement
- 1 Over 10 acres in size
- 1 Activity on Classified Forest
- 1 Connects existing woods
- 2 Windbreaks around Livestock

The local ranking for the application is based on:

High - 3 or more points

Medium - 2 points

Low – 1 point

Points State Ranking Criteria

- 1 Soils with slopes where reforestation would be beneficial

The state ranking for an application is based on:

High – 2 or more of the criteria apply.

Medium - 1 of the criteria apply.

Low - none of the criteria apply.